



City of Granite City

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Board of Appeals

MINUTES

September 3, 2020

The Granite City Board of Appeals met on Thursday, September 3, 2020. Chairman Sam Akeman called the meeting to Order at 5:00 PM.

WELCOME

The Chairman Sam Akeman welcomed everyone and began the meeting by requesting Roll Call.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Sam Akeman, Kitty Reither, David Czerny, Gloria Rains, Sharon Aleksandrian and Leroy Taylor. Excused Absent: Barbara Hawkins

Also present: Asst. City Attorney Derek Filcoff
Alderman Tim Elliott

COMMENTS/SWEAR IN

The Chair explained to the Petitioners the Board of Appeals is a recommending body to the City Council and the Council will have the final determination at their next regularly scheduled meeting to be held on September 15, 2020. The Petitioners were asked to stand and they were sworn in.

MINUTES / AGENDA

A motion to approve the Minutes from the previous meeting held January 16, 2020 and this evening's Agenda was made by Gloria Rains and seconded by LeRoy Taylor. All in favor. Motion carried.

PETITIONER: (1) Hope Clinic
 1602 21st St
 22-2-20-19-06-102-004

Chairman Sam Akeman explained the Petition to consider a variance, to allow a wrought iron fence along the perimeter of the property and the front property line.

Stephanie Kraft Sheley, Attorney, spoke regarding the fence on behalf of the Hope Clinic for Women. She explained the variance request application submitted to construct a fence around the front parking lot of the clinic. The primary reasons for the request are to ensure the safety of people entering and exiting the clinic. Many instances of trespassing where people have approached and physically attempted to touch and confront drivers and passengers of vehicles in the parking lot of the clinic have occurred. Quite often the police have to be called to the location to handle issues between the protestors and the patrons and/or escorts and a fence would put a barrier between them, in hopes to detour such interactions. She also explained that many of the protestors do not wear masks in this time of Covid-19 and yell in the face of people, and the fence would help with the unwelcomed contact.

Deputy Director of the Hope Clinic, Alison Dreith also addressed the Board of Appeals regarding the fence. She explained that they have tried to choose a fence that is beautiful. She explained that it would be an actual steel decorative fence 4-5 feet tall. She also believes that the fence is a safety issue and that it will provide a physical barrier to between patients, escorts and protestors and minimize the need for calls to the Granite City Police.

Kitty Reither stated that the Hope Clinic has been in existence for quite a long time and in all that time a fence has never been requested before. She feels that a wrought iron fence will not protect from badgering or anyone who would want to reach through or other types of violence such as gun fire.

Sam Akeman stated that no fence would protect from gunfire.

Alison Dreith explained that the Hope Clinic has been in the community for 46 years and many situations have happened in that time. In 1980 the owner and his wife were kidnapped and held for ransom for quite some time. In the past there was a wooden privacy fence at the old building, but in the 1990's when the new building was built a fence was not constructed. She explained that protestors have the legal right to be there and that confrontation could still occur, but the physical barrier would give peace of mind to staff and patients.

Stephanie Kraft Sheley, explained that because a fence variance has not been pursued for in the past should not preclude them or forecloses them that right to do so at this time. She also stated that she agrees a wrought iron fence will not stop anyone from reaching through but it will stop them from trespassing on the property

Kitty Reither asked if they have security. Alison Dreith explained that yes they have unarmed security. They do ask people who are trespassing to remove themselves and they check patients ID before entering building. But are limited.

Gloria Rains asked if there are cameras. Alison Dreith explained that they do have cameras.

Gloria Rains asked the hours. Alison Dreith stated: Monday-Friday 9-5 and Saturday 9-2
Gloria Rains asked when they usually have protestors. Alison Dreith answered that protestors are usually there in the morning hours. But during certain campaigns such as 40 Days for Life, when they do have more protestors at all hours of operation.

Alderman Tim Elliott asked about the height of the fence. Alison Dreith stated 4 or 5 feet.

Dereck Filcoff explained that the board could set the height.

Sam Akeman asked what area the fence would cover. Alison Dreith explained that the fence would be across the front of the lot and down both sides. No fence in the rear.

Kitty Reither ask if they would have gates on the parking lot. Alison Dreith answered that the There would be no gates, the driveways would be open.

Gloria Rains asked if the protestors become violent. Alison Dreith explained that they do have some that cause trouble on a regular basis, it would depend on what she would think was violent. Some do have 30-40 history of anti-abortion extremism and they do post online about extreme protesting at the Hope Clinic. Those protestors are on a first name basis with the police department. Sam Akeman asked if there were any more questions.

MOTION By David Czerny, second by Gloria Rains to approve the request for a variance, to allow a 5 foot wrought iron fence along the perimeter of the property and the front property line at 1602 21st Street, Hope Clinic for Women. Motion Denied.

ROLL CALL:

Sam Akeman	YES	Kitty Reither	NO
David Czerny	YES	Gloria Rains	NO
Sharon Aleksandrian	NO	LeRoy Taylor	NO

NEW BUSINESS

None voiced.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None voiced.

MOTION by LeRoy Taylor, second by Sharon Alexandrian to adjourn the Board of Appeals meeting. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Melanye Weinoffer
Board of Appeals Secretary

BOARD OF APPEALS
ADVISORY REPORT
September 3, 2020

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ROLL CALL:

Sam Akeman	YES	Kitty Reither	NO
David Czerny	YES	Gloria Rains	NO
Sharon Aleksandrian	NO	LeRoy Taylor	NO
